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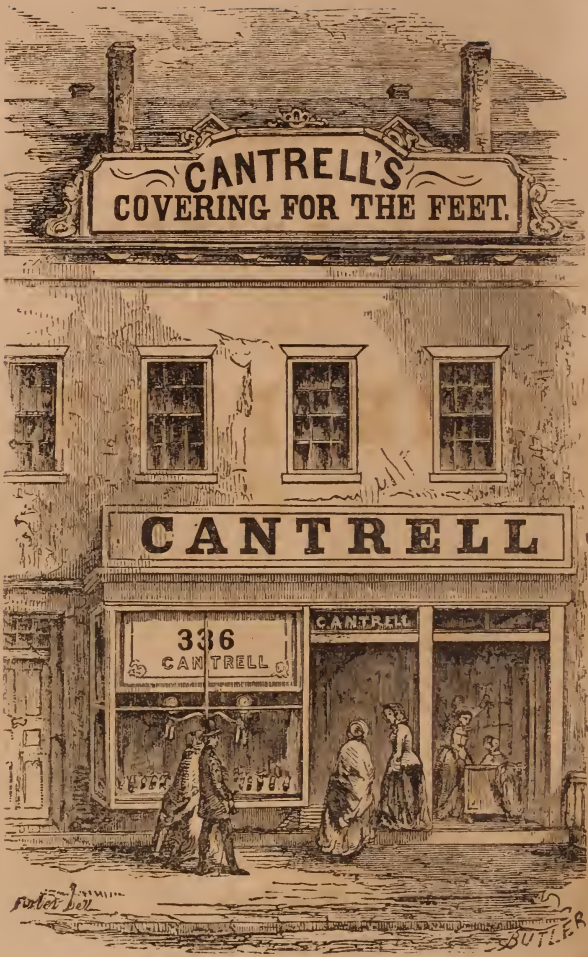
CANTRELL'S
COVERING FOR THE
FEET
336 Bowery
BETWEEN
BOND AND GREAT JONES S.TS.
NEW-YORK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COVERINGS

FOR

THE FEET.

BY

S. CANTRELL,

LADIES' SHOE MANUFACTURER,

OF

No. 336 BOWERY,

Between Bond and Great Jones Street,

New York.

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CANTRELL'S

COVERINGS FOR THE FEET.

Coverings for the feet have been worn since the earliest ages, descriptions of them having been readily traced back to a period nearly fifteen hundred years before the birth of Christ. The first essay in giving shape, or style, to the rude skins that had previously enveloped the feet, produced the Sandal.

These articles differed materially in style, though the form varied but slightly. Those worn by the poorer classes were constructed of "flat slices of the palm leaf, which, lapped over in the centre, formed the sole, and a double band of twisted leaves secured and strengthened the edge; a thong of the strong fibres of the same plant was affixed to each side of the instep and was secured round the

foot," while those indulged in by the more wealthy classes were made of leather, and were frequently lined with cloth, the point, or end turning up like a pair of modern skates.

The Sandal reached a great state of perfection among the Romans, and it was to the gallantry of the Emperor Aurelian that the ladies were allowed the exclusive privilege of having them manufactured of red, yellow, white or green color, the men being expressly debarred from this liberty. Gold, or precious stones, however, as decorations were not allowed even the ladies. The Roman senators wore buskins of a black color with a crescent of gold or silver on the top of the foot, and the Roman soldiers wore simple sandals fastened by thongs.

It was in the reign of the third Edward of England, that "the gentle craft," as the trade of shoemaking was then poetically called, produced boots and shoes of the most sumptuous description. The greatest variety of pattern, and the richest contrasts of color were aimed at by the maker of shoes at this period, and to enable the reader to judge with what effect, we furnish an engraving of the various styles.

It is impossible to conceive any shoe more exquisite in design than fig. 4, of our plate. It is worn by a royal personage, and it brings forcibly to mind the rose windows, and other details of the

architecture of this period ; but, for beauty of pattern and splendor of effect, this English shoe of the middle ages is "beyond all Greek, beyond all Roman fame," for their sandals and shoes have not half "the glory of regality contained in this one specimen." The fifth figure in the same plate is simpler in design but not less striking in effect, being colored (as the previous one is) solid black, the red hose adding considerably to its effect. No. 6, is still more peculiar to those times, the left shoe is black and the stocking blue, the other leg of the same figure being clothed in a black stocking and a white shoe. The form of this latter one is that usually worn by persons of all classes, of course omitting the elaborate ornament. The shoe was cut very low over the instep, the heel being entirely covered, and a band fastened by a small buckle or button passing round the ankle secured it to the foot.

The boots and shoes worn during the fourteenth century, were of peculiar form, and the toes which were lengthened to a point, turned inward or outward according to the taste of the wearer. In the reign of Richard II., they became immensely long, so that it was asserted they were chained to the knee of the wearer, in order to allow him to walk about with ease and freedom. It was, of course,

only the nobility who could thus inconvenience themselves, and it might have been adopted by them as a distinction ; still very pointed toes were worn by all who could afford to be fashionable.

From this extreme of length, fashion introduced during the reign of Edward IV. another equally as absurd. The king having enacted that any shoemaker who made for unprivileged persons (the nobility being exempted) any shoes, the toes of which *exceeded two inches in length*, should forfeit twenty shillings. This had the effect of *widening* the toes, and they became as laughably broad as they had formerly been ridiculously long. To counteract this, Mary, in her reign, proclaimed that the width at the toe should not exceed *six inches*.

Philip Stubbes, the puritanical author of the "Anatomy of Abuses," declared that in the year 1588, the fashionables wore "corked shoes, puisnets, pantoffles, and slippers, some of them of black velvet, some of white, some of green, and some of yellow ; some of Spanish leather, and some of English, stitched with silk, and embroidered with gold and silver all over the foot with gewgaws innumerable." Rich and expensive shoe-ties were now brought into use, and large sums were lavished upon their decorations. John Taylor, the water poet, alludes to the extravagance of those who

> "Wear a farm in shoe-strings edged with gold,
> And spangled garters worth a copy-hold."

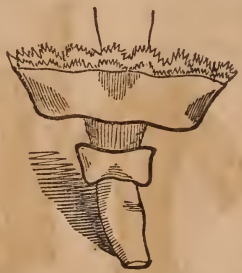
The shoe-roses were made of lace, which was as beautiful, costly, and elaborate, as that which composed the ruff for the neck, or ruffles for the wrist. They were elaborately decorated with needlework and gold and silver thread.

During the reign of the first Charles, the boots (which were made of fine Spanish leather, of a buff color) became very large and wide at the top. Indeed, they were so wide at times, as to oblige the wearer to stride much in walking, a habit that was much ridiculed by the satirists of the day. There was a print published during this reign, of a dandy in the height of fashion, whose legs are "incased in boot-hose tops tied about the middle of the calf, as long as a pair of shirt-sleeves, double at the end like a ruff-band: the top of his boots very large, fringed with lace, and turned down as low as his spurs, which jingled like the bells of a morris-dancer as he walked." These boots were made very long in the toe, thus, of this exquisite, we are told, "the feet of his boots were two inches too long."

The boot-tops at this time were made wide, and were capable of being turned over beneath the knee, which they completely covered when they were uplifted. They were of course made of pliant leather to allow of this—"Spanish leather,"—according to Ben Jonson.

During the whole of the Commonwealth large boot-tops of this kind were worn even by the puritans ; they were, however, large only, and not decorated with costly lace. The shoes worn were generally particularly simple in their construction and form, and those who did not wish to be classed among the vain and frivolous, took care to have their toes sharp at the point, as a distinction between themselves and the "graceless gallants," who generally wore theirs very broad.

With the restoration of Charles II. came the large French boot, in which the courtiers of "Louis le grand," always delighted to exhibit their legs. Of the amplitude of its tops, the woodcut will give an idea. The boot is decorated with lace all round



the upper part, and that portion of the leg which the boot encases, seems fitted easily with pliant leather ; over the instep is a broad band of the same material, beneath which the spur was fasten-

ed ; and the heel is high, and toe broad, of all the boots and shoes then fashionable.

During the reign of William III., the shoes worn by the ladies were similar to those in the following cut.

The clog beneath the shoe on the left side was merely a single piece of stout leather, which, however conducive it may have been to the health of the wearer, it certainly added neither elegance nor comfort to the shoe itself.

The distinguishing marks of gentility in the reigns of George I. and II., were *red heels.* At this period the ladies preferred silk or velvet to leather, the favorite shoe with ladies of nobility being made of figured blue silk with bright red heels and silver buckles.

The shoe here delineated was that in fashion in the year 1780. Ten years later a change occurred by which ladies shoes were made very flat and low

in the heels, the low quarters, the diminutive heel, and small tie in front, giving it the appearance of the slipper of the present day.

A picture by Fores was published in the year 1791, of a shoe worn by the duchess of York. The shoe was made of green silk, ornamented with gold stars, and was bound with scarlet silk ; the heel was scarlet and shaped exactly in the modern style.

Shoe buckles almost entirely disappeared about the commencement of the present century, notwithstanding the interference of the Prince of Wales, who would have aided the unfortunate buckle makers by preserving this custom, but fashion in this, as in hundreds of similar cases, proved more powerful than the influence of the great, and shoe strings, although less elegant and costly, eventually triumphed.

The accompanying cut represents a variety of shoes worn by females. The first is the sandal of a Russian lady of 1768. The second is that of a female of Finland. This is a low slipper-like shoe, and is secured by a band across the instep, having an ornamental clasp, like a brooch, to secure it on each side of the foot ; it was probably a coarsely-made piece of jewelry, with glass or cheap stones set around it ; as the people of this country at that time were fond of such showy decorations, and particularly upon their shoes. Number three is a produc-

tion of the same country, and is similar to those worn by the matrons of the upper classes. Number four is the shoe of a Tartarian lady of 1577. Numbers five and six, are examples of the shoes of the oriental ladies, which are sometimes highly ornamented ; the covering part being wrought with gold, silver, and silk, and perhaps set with jewels, real or imitated. The shoes of noblemen are of precisely similar construction. They are no doubt easy to wear.

Not so are the ladies' shoes, for they only were allowed the privilege of discomfort, fashion having in this country declared in favor of small feet, and the prejudice of the people having gone with it, the feet of all ladies of decent rank in society, are cramped in early life, by being placed in so strait a confinement, that their growth is retarded, and they are not more than three or four inches in length, from the toe to the heel. By the smallness of the foot the rank or high-breeding of the lady is decided on, and the utmost torment is endured by the girls in early life, to insure themselves this distinction in rank ; the lower classes of females not being allowed to torture themselves in the same manner. The Chinese poets frequently indulge in panegyrics on the beauty of these crippled members of the body, and none of their heroines are considered perfect without excessively small feet,

when they are affectionately termed by them "the little golden lilies." It is needless to say that the tortures of early youth are succeeded by a crippled maturity, a Chinese lady of high birth being scarcely able to walk without assistance. These shoes are generally made of silk and embroidered in the most beautiful manner, with flowers and ornaments in colored silk and threads of gold and silver. A piece of stout silk is generally attached to the heel for the convenience of pulling up the shoe.

The Turkish ladies of the sixteenth century, and very probably much earlier, wore a very high shoe known in Europe by the name of a "chopine." This fashion spread in Europe in the early part of the seventeenth century, and it is alluded to by Hamlet, in act ii., scene 2, when he exclaims, "Your ladyship is nearer heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine," by which it appears that something of the kind was known in England, where it may have been introduced from Venice, as the ladies there wore them of the most exaggerated size.

Coryat, in his "Crudities," 1611, says: "There is one thing used of the Venetian women, and some others dwelling in the cities and towns subject to signiory of Venice, that is not to be observed (I think) among any other women in Christendom"—the reader must remember that it was new to Cor-

yat, but a common fashion in the East—"which is so common in Venice that no woman whatsoever goeth without it, either in her house or abroad—a thing made of wood and covered with leather of sundry colors; some with white, some red, some yellow. It is called a *chapiney*, which they never wear under their shoes. Many of these are curiously painted; some of them I have also seen fairly gilt; so uncomely a thing, in my opinion, that it is a pity this foolish custom is not clean banished and exterminated out of the city. There are many of these chapineys of a great height, even half a yard high, which maketh many of their women, that are very short, seem much taller than the tallest women we have in England. Also, I have heard it observed among them, that by how much the nobler a woman is, by so much the higher are her chapineys. All their gentlewomen, and most of their wives and widows that are of any wealth, are assisted and supported either by men or women, when they walk abroad, to the end they might not fall. They are borne up most commonly by the left arm; otherwise they might quickly take a fall." In Douce's Illustrations of Shakspere, a woodcut of such a chapiney, or chopine, is given, which is here copied; and it is an excellent example of the thing, showing the decorations which was at times bestowed upon it.

Evelyn, when in Italy, thus humorously describes in his 'Diary,' this article: "It was now Ascension Weeke, and the great Mart or Faire of ye whole yeare was now kept, every bodie at liberty, and jollie. The noblemen walk with their ladies stalking on 'choppines;' these are high-heeled shoes, particularly affected by these proud dames, or, as some say, invented to keepe them at home, it being very difficult to walk with them; whence one being asked how he liked the Venetian dames, replied, that they were 'mezzo carno, mezzo ligno' (half flesh, half wood), and that he would have none of them. When they walk abroad they set

their hands on the heads of two matron-like servants, or old women, to support them, who continue mumbling their beads. 'Tis ridiculous to see how these ladies crawle in and out of their gondolas by reason of their choppines, and what dwrafs they appear when taken down from their wooden scaffolds." Something of the kind is worn in Italy in the present day by the lower orders.

Of the modern European nations with whom we have been most in contact—Spain, France, and the Netherlands—their boots and shoes have so nearly resembled our own, as to render a detailed description scarcely necessary. Indeed, as France has been tacitly submitted to as the *arbiter elegantiarum* in all matters of dress, much has been derived thence.

There is, however, a French shoe that we do not appear to have adopted for many years ; it was made low in the quarters and ended at the instep ; there was no covering for the heel, or the sides of the foot beyond it. But laterly they have come into vogue.

The *sabots* of France, recently introduced, taken from the French, are generally clumsy enough ; but their large size, and bad fit, are generally improved by the introduction of others made of list, which give warmth and steadiness to the foot. A small wooden shoe is, however, made in Normandy, and elsewhere, much like that which came into fashion

about 1790, with an imitation of its fringes and pointed toe, and which is generally painted black; the ordinary *sabot* being totally unadorned, and the color of the wood.

MODERN COVERINGS FOR THE FEET.

The introduction of the GAITER BOOT, has generally and correctly been attributed to the late Countess of Blessington, and it has enjoyed since an almost universal popularity. Hall, an English writer upon this subject says :

" I am of opinion that the best coverings for the feet are boots ; not only do they look neat and tidy, but the general and gradual support they give all over the feet and ankles induces strength and gives tone to the veins and muscles. Shoes, on the contrary, and especially long-quartered ones, require a great effort from the muscles to be kept on, and this, when long applied, tires and weakens. The lace and button boots usually worn need not be described ; they are very good and suitable to most feet, and, if cut well and lasted properly, generally give comfort and satisfaction. The trouble, however, of lacing and unlacing, the tag coming off, the button breaking, or the shank hurting, the holes soon wearing out, and many other little annoyances, have all been experienced as *bores* by thousands who have worn that kind of boot."

These annoyances were obviated in a great measure by the production of the elastic Gaiter.

THE FRENCH SLIPPER.

The importation of these light and exceedingly beautiful "coverings for the feet," manufactured in Paris, has been carried on to a considerable extent, though the increasing skill of the American artizan has, within the past few years, materially diminished the trade, the home-made article rivalling in delicacy of structure the most elegant specimens of Parisian handicraft. The writer of this work was awarded at the late "FAIR OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE," the highest premium for his contribution to the exhibition of his "*Imitations of the French Slipper.*" Specimens of both the original and imitated article can be seen at his establishment, to which an inspection is most respectfully invited.

While on this subject I cannot refrain from appealing to the patriotism of my fair countrywomen in behalf of American fabrics. I do not claim that

the coverings for the feet made in this country are superior to those of the French, but I do unhesitatingly assert that, however they may excel us in other matters, we are at least their equals in this branch of industry ; a convincing proof of this is shown by the fact that at the Exhibition of the Industry of all Nations in London, a New York shoe manufacturer received the highest premium for his specimens. To distinguish the difference between the foreign and native production, requires the keenest perception, and I know of all the slippers sold here as French, *nine tenths of them are made in this city.* And who is to blame for this deceit ? Our manufacturers have the ability to compete with the best workmen in the world, yet as they cannot convince their fair customers of it, they are compelled to impose upon them with a spurious article, French only in name. An instance illustrative of this occurred in a Broadway establishment a few years since. A lady, after examining the slippers of the tradesman, said, "Mr. ——, why do you not import your slippers from Paris ?" "Madam," was the reply, "I have already sent out an order, and I expect every day the arrival of a very extensive assortment ; if you will call in in about a week, I think I can furnish you with just the article you desire." The lady left, promising to return, and Mr. —— visited his printer and had a number of

"tickets," bearing the name of an imaginary French shoe maker, struck off, and by her next visit he was prepared with a "very extensive assortment." She was fitted with a pair, and after extolling the style, elegance, and comfort of her slippers, insulted the tradesman by enquiring "why *he* did not make such shoes." This is an absolute fact, for I was an eye-witness to the whole of it, being employed as an assistant in the establishment at the time of its occurrence.

GAITERS.

The manufacture of the Gaiter has attained a high degree of excellence, and those designed for "promenade," made of worsted and silk materials, are justly entitled "beautiful," for their neatness and lightness, as well as for the superiority of the materials of which they are composed. In the winter of eighteen hundred and fifty, the writer, anxious to furnish the public with a *neat, comfortable, durable and cheap article*, produced his

ALPINE BOOTS.

This boot is made of cloth, lined with Chamois skin, and is especially valuable to invalids, obviating in clear, cold weather, those universally conceded, unhealthy India rubber over-shoes. *The Alpine Gaiters are sold at twenty shillings per pair.* They

have been imitated by a large number of city manufacturers, and have attained a wonderful degree of

popularity. This boot has secured the warmest eulogiums from ladies of the highest respectability, and among those who have worn and approved of them, are Mrs. Dr. Francis, Mrs. Dr. Budd, Mrs. Langdon. &c.

THE LINEN GAITERS.

A very neat and substantial summer boot, principally designed for traveling, sold at fourteen shillings per pair. As an evidence of appreciation on the part of the public we need but mention the fact that at "Cantrell's establishment," between two and three thousand pair of his "Linen Gaiters" have been sold at retail in one season.

TIES AND BUSKINS.

A great variety of these articles, manufactured in a superior and thoroughly workmanlike manner, can be found at this establishment, selling at all prices.

TOILET SLIPPERS.

Fancy can scarcely conceive more elegant fabrics than the "Toilet Slippers" for ladies and gentlemen. They are of a great variety of designs, and are manufactured of cloth and velvet richly and elaborately embroidered. They are principally in demand during the "Holiday Season," ladies deeming them very appropriate gifts for their male acquaintances. In this department is also to be found an elegant assortment of QUILTED BUSKINS AND BOOTS for cold weather.

GAITERS WITH HEELS.

As we have stated elsewhere, that nearly a century ago, the ladies wore heels to their shoes, therefore this addition to the modern Gaiter may be looked upon as the revival of an old fashion. The ladies certainly affect the new, or rather the old style, especially those of a diminutive size, as it gives them an appearance of being much taller than they really are. The heroine of Sir John Suckling's poem must have worn shoes with heels.

"Her feet beneath her petticoat
Like little mice stole in and out,
As if they feared the light;
But oh, she dances such a way,
No sun upon an Easter day
Is half so fine a sight."

BOYS' AND YOUTHS', MISSES' AND CHILDREN'S BOOTS AND SHOES.

Particular attention is paid to this branch of manufacture, and a very extensive and varied assortment of boots and shoes for children is constantly replenished by all the latest and most fashionable styles, and among which can always be found, calf-skin and patent leather boots for boys, patent leather brogans for youths, and gaiters and slippers for Misses, as well as a general supply of coarse articles for common use.

OVERSHOES.

India rubber overshoes of all sizes, qualities and prices, from the manufactory of Goodyear, for ladies and children, boys and youths.

TO THE LADIES.

For fifteen years past the advertiser has been engaged in the manufacture and sale of ladies shoes at his present establishment, and as it has been his aim throughout his business career, rather to establish a reputation for the quality of his productions than to realize enormous profits, he is encouraged in the belief that the principle on which his business has been conducted has been in every respect satisfactory to the many thousands who have so liberally and generously patronized him.

Determined upon the outset to furnish articles only of a superior quality, and that at the lowest living profit, he points with confidence to the introduction of the "Alpine and Linen Gaiters," &c., as an evidence of his having faithfully adhered to that determination, and while envying the success of no one, he trusts it may not be deemed egotistical in him to assert, that his facilities for the manufacture of

LADIES' GAITERS, SLIPPERS, BUSKINS, TIES, AND TOILET SHOES,

Are unrivalled, and that he can supply them of a better quality and at a more reasonable rate than any other dealer or manufacturer in the United States. In inviting a continuance of the patronage of the ladies, he begs to reiterate the assurance that his first consideration will be, as it always has been, to afford them the utmost satisfaction, both as regards the appearance and quality of his work, and the reasonableness of his charges. The extent and variety of his stock, obviates the necessity of waiting for the fulfillment of orders, as the wants of every one can be promptly and satisfactorily supplied.

TO SOUTHERN AND WESTERN DEALERS.

The extensive arrangements of this establish-

ment are of such a nature that an order for any quantity, or any description of boots or shoes, can be furnished at the shortest conceivable notice, and dealers in search of articles, of the best materials, and characterized by taste and elegance in their manufacture, can deal here most advantageously, as for the purpose of extending his business, he is determined to sell at least ten per cent. less than the city wholesale dealers. Call and compare his prices with those of the "down town" establishments.

WHERE TO BUY.

The prejudices that have existed against establishments located in the Bowery are rapidly disappearing, and this popular thoroughfare can now boast of an unrivalled number of *first class establishments*, whose customers rank among the most respectable and influential families of the city. This is the natural result of the difference in the value of property between this street and Broadway, for while the tenants in the latter street, paying extravgant rents, are compelled to realize enormous profits, the dealers in the Bowery are enabled to furnish merchandize equal in quality, at least ten, and in many instances, twenty per cent. less than those in the rival streets. In fact there is a large amount of property manufactured in the Bowery

and sold to the tradesmen of Broadway, and by them resold at advance prices, to those who still cling to the old fashioned, though now nearly exploded idea, that any thing purchased east of that street must be of an inferior character. The intelligent can by comparison learn the truth of this, and I appeal to them to do us—the residents of the Bowery—the justice to make this comparison.

ANECDOTES OF THE CRAFT.

The following pleasant anecdote used to be told by the eccentric Dr. Monsey. The duke of Leeds, the doctor, and his grace's chaplain, being one morning, soon after breakfast, in his library; Mr. Walkden, of Pall Mall, his grace's shoemaker, was shown in with a pair of new shoes for the duke. The latter was remarkably fond of him, as he was at the same time clerk of St. James's church, where the duke was a constant attendant. "What have you there, Walkden?" said the duke.—"A pair of shoes for your grace," he replied.—"Let me see them." They were handed to him accordingly. The chaplain taking up one of them examined it with great attention: "What is the price?" asked the chaplain. "Half a guinea, sir," said the shoemaker. "Half a guinea! what for a pair of shoes?" said the chaplain. "Why I could go to Cranbourn alley, and buy a better pair of shoes

than they ever were or ever will be, for five and sixpence." He then threw the shoe to the other end of the room. Walkden threw the other after it, saying as they were fellows they ought to go together; and at the same time replied to the chaplain: "Sir, I can go to a stall in Moorfields and buy a better sermon for twopence, than my lord gives you a guinea for." The duke clapped Walkden on the shoulder, and said, "That is a most excellent retort, Walkden; make me half a dozen pairs of shoes directly."

The greatest multitude of shoemakers ever known to have been assembled on one occasion, were collected by the celebrated mob-orator, Henley, at his oratory near Lincoln's-Inn-Fields. This public declaimer used to discourse on general topics during the week, and on some subject of morality on the Sunday. On the above occasion he had announced that on a given day he should discourse to shoemakers, and that he could teach them a most expeditious method of making shoes—which proved to be no other than cutting off the tops of ready-made boots! The admission ticket on that occacasion bore the following motto: "Omne majus continet in se minus." The writer of this anecdote says: "I can not think the representatives of

Prince Crispin would have pocketed this insult. I think they would have *bristled* up, one and *all*, and, *waxing* wroth, would not have waited for the *ends* of justice, but would have brought the orator down from his 'gilt tub,' and persevering to the *last*, have put their *soles* upon his neck till he had discovered too late, that the 'gentle craft,' might not be insulted with impunity.

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CLASS.

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